

***Penstemon eriantherus* Pursh. var. *whitedii* (Piper) A. Nels.**

Whited's penstemon
Scrophulariaceae (Figwort Family)

Status: State Sensitive

Rank: G4T2S2

General Description: Adapted from Hitchcock et al. (1959): This species is a perennial, 8-16 in. (20-42 cm) tall with several stems arising from a woody base. The plant may be partly hairless; otherwise the plant is grayish-hairy. The leaves are entire or toothed and up to 5 in. (13 cm) long and $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (2 cm) wide; they are mostly broadest near the base, and often wholly or partly surrounding the stem. Inflorescences are made up of several distinct axillary cymes. The elongated calyx is $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (7-13 mm) long, with lanceolate leafy segments. The glandular corolla is hairy, light blue to orchid, $\frac{3}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. (2-4 cm) long, and mostly $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (6-14 mm) wide at the mouth; it is strongly inflated, and the lower lip is moderately longer than the upper. The raised part of the lower lip of the corolla is strongly bearded (bearing tufts of long hairs). The pollen sacs are less than $\frac{1}{16}$ in. (1.1-1.8 mm) long, and hairless except for their toothed sutures, which are covered with fine bristles. The staminode (a modified sterile stamen) more or less protrudes from the orifice of the corolla, and is slightly expanded toward the tip and prominently long-bearded for most of its length. The ovaries and capsules are glandular and minutely covered with fine short hairs near the tips.

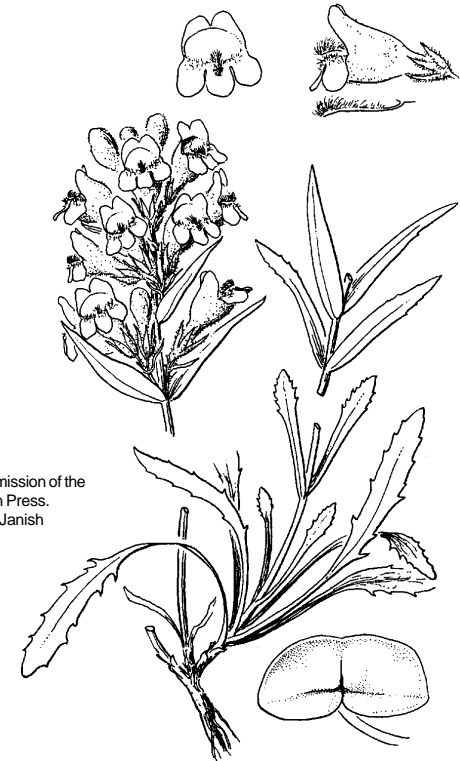
Identification Tips: Four varieties of *Penstemon eriantherus* occur in the Pacific Northwest: variety *whitedii*, variety *eriantherus*, variety *argillosus*, and variety *redactus*. Neither variety *argillosus* nor variety *redactus* occur in Washington. Varieties *whitedii* and *eriantherus* both have densely bearded stamenodia for most of their length and can be distinguished by the following characteristics. The pollen sacs of variety *whitedii* are 3 to 4 times as long as wide when fully mature, not flattened at maturity, and the two halves of the pollen sacs only have a short line of contact at the base, whereas the pollen sacs of variety *eriantherus* are approximately as long as wide when fully mature, become flattened and have long lines of connection between the two halves. Furthermore, the axillary cymes of variety *whitedii* appear to be well separated versus the axillary cymes of variety *eriantherus* that do not appear well separated.

Phenology: This taxon flowers in May and June.

Range: This endemic taxon can be found in Franklin, Chelan, Kittitas, Douglas, Klickitat and Lincoln counties, Washington.

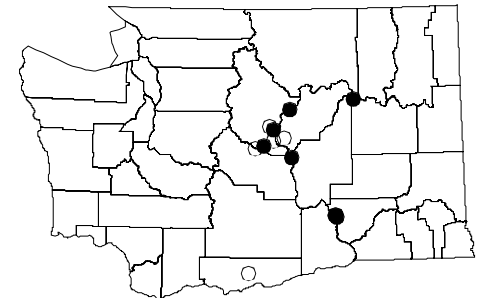
Penstemon eriantherus* Pursh. var. *whitedii

Whited's penstemon



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Known distribution
of *Penstemon eriantherus*
var. *whitedii*
in Washington



● Current (1980+)
○ Historic (older than 1980)

Penstemon eriantherus* Pursh. var. *whitedii

Whited's penstemon



Dr. Dee Strickler

Penstemon eriantherus* Pursh. var. *whitedii

Whited's penstemon

Habitat: This taxon occurs on west facing slopes of small canyons, and in dry and rocky habitats in the foothills of the Cascade Range and in the Columbia Basin from 525 to 3835 feet (160-1160 meters) elevation. It has been observed in antelope bitterbrush/Indian ricegrass (*Purshia tridentata*/*Oryzopsis hymenoides*), purple sage/wheatgrass (*Salvia dorrii*/*Agropyron spicatum*) and rabbitbrush/bluebunch wheatgrass (*Chrysothamnus nauseosus*/*Agropyron spicatum*) plant communities

Ecology: This taxon is found in dry, open places in the plains, valleys, and foothills, sometimes ascending to moderate elevations in the mountains. Some sites have high levels of caliche fragments.

State Status Comments: Since 1899 there have been fewer than fifteen documented occurrences of the taxon in Washington.

Inventory Needs: Known occurrences should be revisited.

Threats and Management Concerns: Some populations occur on private land, and in one instance is in an area heavily used for agriculture. Grazing and ORV's may affect the taxon.

References:

Hitchcock, C.L., A. Cronquist, M. Ownbey, J.W. Thompson. 1959. *Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest Part 4: Ericaceae Through Campanulaceae*. University of Washington Press, Seattle, WA. 510 pp.

The Washington Natural Heritage Program. 1979. Status report: *Penstemon eriantherus* var. *whitedii*. Unpublished. On file with WNHP.